



TEAM-BUILDING »

NEW VIEW

Challenge your perspective at Pocono TreeVentures.

Open year-round, weather permitting, Pocono TreeVentures offers a new perspective, literally. On the advanced course, the high point offers views from 30 feet off the ground. “With a team-building curriculum that focuses on the special attraction of climbing from tree to tree while seeing the world from a bird’s-eye view, Pocono TreeVentures is ideal for group outings,” says Gina Bertucci, vice president of marketing for Bushkill Group Inc. Guests choose which course(s) to use and how far up they’ll go on tree platforms. The platforms are connected by challenging “bridges,” constructed with swaying ropes and cables. As the courses increase in difficulty, the bridges offer less support (and more exhilaration) with tightropes, swinging wood steps and the like. The aerial ropes courses and zip lines are meant for anyone (age 7 and up) who enjoys climbing. If you’re ready to shake things up, plan your next outing or corporate event at Pocono TreeVentures. —Carolee Noury

Get Connected: POCONO TREEVENTURES | poconotreeventures.com | 800.784.4442

TASTE »

Fruitful

Subarashii Kudamono offers local varieties of the delectable Asian pear.

Subarashii Kudamono [translated: wonderful fruit] may be a mouthful, but it’s a delicious one. The Coopersburg business develops and cultivates novel Asian pear species. The beloved fruit, more closely related to roses than their European namesake, is incredibly juicy, crunchy and distinct. “Each of our varieties has a unique flavor profile,” says Holly Harter, director of marketing. “Like fine wines, the pears have hints of other flavors: star fruit, apricot, cashew, citrus and melon. Rainfall also impacts the flavor, producing sweeter, more intense pears in drier years.”

Seeking a memorable gift for your next event? The specialty fruit is shipped in lovely gift boxes and is available for order beginning in late August/early September. The pears, which don’t soften when ripe, are ready to eat as soon as they arrive. wonderfulfruit.com —Carolee Noury



PHOTOS: DAVID W. COULTER; STUDIO E IMAGING LLC

I WON'T HAVE WHAT SHE'S HAVING

Plum Street Gourmet gives us an inside look at how caterers respond to dietary trends and allergies. **BY CAROLEE NOURY**

PLUM STREET GOURMET OPENED ITS DOORS IN 1984. While dietary needs have changed over the years, the eatery's commitment to delighting catering customers has not. Alexis Herr, the in-house event planner, spoke with *Pennsylvania Meetings + Events* about how they work with menu adjustments for special diets, including food allergies, vegetarian fare and their optional Healthy Plates meals.

PAM+E: *What are some of the most often requested menu adaptations?*

AH: Lacto-Ovo vegetarian meals [dairy and eggs are OK] are the most requested. Once in a while, we get a vegan [no animal products, including honey] request. Less often, but more each year, we get orders for gluten-free meals.

PAM+E: *How challenging is it to alter your standard menu?*

AH: Since we do almost all food preparation in-house, and enjoy learning new things, it's usually not much trouble. Gluten-free can be especially difficult when it comes to baked goods, but our chef is dedicated to finding worthy substitutes. We have a delicious gluten-free peanut butter cookie that gets rave reviews from our customers. It's definitely a learning process with plenty of experimenting along the way.

PAM+E: *What comes to mind when you reflect on your most specialized catering order recently?*

AH: One thing that can be tricky is when someone requests a vegetarian option that is as similar to the meat option as possible. This is particularly true for special menus, such as regional cuisine. In other words, something we haven't made before. For example, we catered with Spanish cuisine recently and had to adjust the recipe to work with fish for one of the guests. Since it wasn't one of our tried-and-true dishes, we had to be creative to get it to our standards. It took some extra time, but we did it.

PAM+E: *What food allergies have you worked with?*

AH: Most often it's raw onion, but we've had nut-free requests, too. Once we worked around a bell pepper allergy.

PAM+E: *How much notice do you need to incorporate special requests?*

AH: Ideally, we know from the first menu planning meeting. But as long as we have at least a week, we can usually manage it. That gives us time to plan and adjust our order for the event's menu.

PAM+E: *And if you find out the day of?*

AH: We freak out a little. [Laughs.] Our first question is how severe the allergy is, since things are often prepared in close proximity. From there, we do our best to identify the safe options. Thankfully, this doesn't happen often.

PAM+E: *If someone needs nutritional information, like a carbohydrate count, how do you work with that?*

AH: We have a special program called Healthy Plates, where we work with reduced sodium, fat, protein, fiber and carbohydrates. This is something our team does without sacrificing taste, which we know is not always the case. Because of this program, we have the information handy. If it is requested ahead of time, we can make sure to have the nutritional information available at the event. The earlier we know about any special requirements, the better we can adapt for them.



Get Connected

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